

Description of a new genus and Species of Rat Kangaroo, allied to the genus *Hypsiprymnus*, proposed to be called *Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*, by E. PIERSON RAMSAY, F.L.S., C.M.Z.S., Curator of the Australian Museum, Sydney.

I had provisionally placed this animal, on account of its dental formula and the formation of its premolars, in the genus *Hypsiprymnus*, from which, however, it must be separated, as will be seen from the following remarks; and on account of these peculiarities and differences, I have formed for its reception the *new genus* I now propose to call *Hypsiprymnodon*, which may be thus characterised:—

HYPSIPRYMNODON. *Gen. Nov.*

Incisors	3—3 — 1—1	Canines	1—1 — 0—0
Premolars	1—1 — 1—1	Molars	4—4 — 4—4

Skull very similar to that of *Hypsiprymnus*, but more elongated anteriorly, the distance between the premolars and canines, and between the canines and third incisor, comparatively greater than in either *Hypsiprymnus* or *Betongia*; angular process of mandible broad and rounded, the ascending of ramus short, rather wide, not much longer than the condyloid, which is also comparatively short; the posterior palatine openings confluent, narrow, acute anteriorly, the anterior margins meeting the exterior-lateral at an acute angle, curved outwards and reaching to opposite the posterior margin of the premolars; anterior palatine openings linear, somewhat oval, twisted, acute posteriorly, (the posterior and basal portions of the skull have been cut away).

The teeth are identical with those of *Betongia* and *Hypsiprymnus*, with these differences; the premolar narrower and placed more obliquely in the jaws—the canines small and feeble; incisors long, narrow, rounded externally. The fore feet of five toes, regular, hand-like, last two joints of the toes scaly, the nails small and

weak ; the second and fourth toes nearly equal, the third only a little longer than the second, the fifth a little longer than the first, which is the shortest ; wrists and first joints of the toes covered with short stiff hairs. The hind feet long, slender, of five toes, the first (thumb) placed far behind, well developed, nearly as long as the fifth or outer toe, second and third conjoined, as in all the kangaroos, in length equal to the outer ; the fourth longest, about one-third longer than the outer toe ; all except the first (thumb) covered with hair, and having short weak nails ; ears large, rounded, bare within, clothed with short hair at the base, on the outside margins nearly bare ; tail about half the length of the body, about an inch of the base clothed with hair, the remainder naked, scaly, intermixed with a few short minute hairs.

HYPSPRYMNODON MOSCHATUS. *Sp. Nov.*

All the upper surface of the body clothed with close and rather stiff fur, of a rich golden colour, mixed with black, the base of the hairs being of a dull dark wood-brown, the remainder yellow and black barred ; head, face, and lower parts of the legs, dark brownish grey—the hairs brown at base, barred with black and white, and being much shorter than on the back—feet and hands dark chocolate-brown, tail blackish brown, with a lead-coloured tinge—along the centre of the throat and chest to the abdomen, a few patches of white. The sexes are alike in colouration, and emit a strong odour of musk. The young of a more golden hue, and less white on the under parts ; irides dark hazel—nostrils blackish—tips naked. Total length of adults 12 inches, tail 6 inches ; fore feet 0·9 inch, hind feet from ankle 1·8 inch. *Habitat* : The dense brushes and scrubs in the Rockingham Bay district. I first met with this highly interesting and anomalous marsupial, while on a visit to the Herbert River in January, 1874, where it inhabits the dense and damp portions of the scrubs which fringe the rivers and clothe the sides of the coast range in that district. The animal is by no means rare, yet from its retiring habits and dense nature of the parts frequented by it, is at all times difficult to obtain. Its habits are chiefly diurnal, and its actions when not disturbed by no means ungraceful ; it progresses in much the same

manner as the kangaroo rats (*Hypsiprymnus*), to which it is closely allied, but procures its food by turning over the *debris* in the scrubs in search of insects, worms, and tuberous roots, frequently eating the palm berries (*Ptychospeema alexandæ*) which it holds in its fore paws after the manner of the phalangers sitting up on its haunches, or sometimes digging like the bandicoots (*Perameles*). Seldom more than one or two are found together, unless accompanied by the young. In March, 1874, I obtained from Mr. K. Broadbent, a female with two young in the pouch, very small, and resembling young bandicoots. During the same month a half-grown young one was shot in company with the adult male and female. They evidently breed during the rainy season, which lasts from February to May. In the young the white marking of the under surface is not so extensive, but the fur of the upper surface is of a more golden hue than in the adults. Both sexes have a strong although not disagreeable odour of musk, which appears to be stronger in the female. Their range of habitant extends over the whole of the scrubs of the Rockingham Bay district, and doubtless as far north as the Daintree River. Mr. Spalding did not obtain any during a recent visit to the Endeavour River.\*

Specimens of an annulose animal resembling *Planaria* were exhibited. They were sent by Mr. ICELY of Coombing, and were found in his garden.

#### DONATION.

Four volumes of the "Flora Australiensis" were received as a donation from the Colonial Secretary, making, with the two previously presented, the entire number as yet published.

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\* I found this species well-known to many of the settlers in the district; but I am chiefly indebted to Mr. Broadbent's energies for the specimens in my collection.